

Srinivas Reddy et al.
Application No.: 09/832,685
Page 7

PATENT

REMARKS

Claims 33-40 and 48-61 are pending in the present patent application. Claims 33, 48, 52, 56, and 58 have been amended and claim 59 has been canceled. Support for the amended claims can be found in the specification. No new matter has been added to the amended claims.

A Request for Continuing Examination (RCE) is being filed concurrently herewith.

Objections to the Claims

The office action objected to claim 39, because "a third logic element" does not have an antecedent basis.

Applicants respectfully disagree with this rejection. Claim 39 properly depends on claim 33, not on claim 38. Claim 33 recites "a first logic element" and "a second logic element." Therefore, it is proper to introduce "a third logic element" into dependent claim 39.

The office action objected to the term "the tristate driver" in line 16 of claim 52. Claim 52 has been amended to recite "the first tristate driver" as suggested by the office action.

The office action objected to the term "may be" in line 13 of claim 56. "May be" has been deleted from claim 56 and replaced with "are" as suggested by the office action.

Anticipation Rejections of the Claims

Claims 33, 34, 37, 38, 48-51, 56, and 58-61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. patent 5,682,107 to Tavana et al. (the Tavana Patent).

Srinivas Reddy et al.
Application No.: 09/832,685
Page 8

PATENT

A. Claim 33

Claim 33 has been amended to recite "a first tristate driver having first and second driver transistors," and "a second tristate driver having third and fourth driver transistors." Support for these amendments can be found in the specification in figure 6 and at page 16, lines 22-23.

In the Tavana Patent, one pass transistor is controlled by each of output of AND gates AND1-AND4 as shown in figure 3B. Each AND gate does not control two driver transistors.

The Tavana patent does not disclose or suggest a first and second tristate drivers each having two driver transistors, wherein the outputs of the tristate drivers are directly connected to the interconnect line. For at least these reasons, claim 33 and its dependent claims are novel and nonobvious over the cited references.

B. Claims 48 and 56

Claim 48 has been amended to recite "a dedicated tristate device having an input coupled to the first programmable interconnect bus; a second programmable interconnect bus coupled to an output of the dedicated tristate device; a second plurality of logic elements configurable to perform logical functions and coupled to the second programmable interconnect bus."

Claim 56 has been amended to recite "a second interconnect bus; a third tristate driver having an input coupled to the first interconnect bus and an output coupled to the second interconnect bus; third and fourth logic elements having inputs coupled to the second interconnect bus, wherein the first tristate driver, the second tristate driver, and the third tristate driver are dynamically tristated and enabled."

Support for the amendments to claims 48 and 56 can be found in the specification in figure 4 and at page 12, lines 16-27.

The Tavana Patent does not disclose or suggest these features of amended claims 48 and 56. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 48 and 56 as well as their dependent claims are novel and nonobvious over the cited prior art.

Srinivas Reddy et al.
Application No.: 09/832,685
Page 9

PATENT

C. Claim 58

Claim 58 has amended to recite:

a first tristate driver coupled between a first logic element and a first interconnect line;
an output enable generation circuit coupled to the first interconnect line;
and
a second tristate driver coupled between a second logic element and a second interconnect line, wherein a control input of the second tristate driver is coupled to the output enable generation circuit.

Support for these amendments can be found in the specification in figure 4 and at page 10, line 17 - page 12, line 15.

The Tavana Patent does not disclose or suggest these features of amended claim 58. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 58 and its dependent claims are novel and nonobvious over the cited prior art.

Double Patenting Rejection

Claims 33-40 and 48-61 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-48 of United States patent number 6,239,613. Applicants request that this rejection be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter has been indicated.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Srinivas Reddy et al.
Application No.: 09/832,685
Page 10

PATENT

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PA 3294317 v1

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APR 03 2003

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